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Review of decision not to award Space Command to Alabama inconclusive, with Trump reversal expected

By **TARA COPP**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — With the Trump administration expected to reverse a controversial 2023 decision on the permanent location of U.S. Space Command, a review by the Defense Department inspector general could not determine why Colorado was chosen over Alabama.

The inspector general's report, issued Friday, said this was in part due to a lack of access to senior defense officials during the Biden administration, when the review began.

The location of U.S. Space Command has significant implications for the local economy, given the fast growth in national defense spending in space-based communications and defenses.

In 2021, the Air Force identified Army Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama, as the preferred location for the new U.S. Space Command due to cost and other factors. But a temporary headquarters had already been established in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and after multiple delays President Joe Biden announced



A soldier wears a U.S. Space Force uniform during a ceremony for U.S. Air Force airmen transitioning to U.S. Space Force guardian designations at Travis Air Force Base, Calif., Feb. 12, 2021.

Associated Press

it as the permanent headquarters.

Alabama's Republican congressional delegation accused the Biden administration of politicizing the decision. But Colorado, which has Republican and Democratic lawmakers, is home to many other Air Force and U.S. Space Force facilities.

As recently as last week,

Rep. Mike Rogers House, an Alabama Republican who chairs the House Armed Services Committee, told a panel at Auburn University he expects the decision to be reversed by the White House before the end of April.

The location of Space Command would be one of many decisions that have swung back and forth

between Biden and President Donald Trump. For instance, Biden stopped the construction of the border wall that began during Trump's first term, only to have Trump now vow to complete it. And Trump is again seeking to ban transgender troops from serving in the military, after Biden removed Trump's first-term limitations.

The controversy over the basing decision began seven days before Trump's first term expired, when his Air Force secretary announced Alabama would be home to Space Command, pending an environmental review.

That review was completed about six months into Biden's term and found no significant impact with hosting the command in Alabama. But the new administration did not act on the decision.

Instead, a year later, the Biden White House said it was keeping the headquarters in Colorado Springs, citing the time that would be lost relocating staff and the headquarters to Huntsville. The report said interviews has been requested with Biden's Air Force Secretary Frank Kendall and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin to understand why Huntsville was not named, but the Biden White House would only allow the interviews if administration lawyers were present. The inspector general rejected that condition, saying it could affect its unfettered access to information. □

NYC Council sues to block Mayor Eric Adams from allowing ICE office on Rikers Island

By **JAKE OFFENHARTZ**
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York City lawmakers are suing to block Mayor Eric Adams from allowing federal immigration agents to operate within the Rikers Island jail complex.

The lawsuit, filed Tuesday by the City Council, accuses Adams of agreeing to the plan to "pay off" the Trump administration in exchange for dropping criminal charges against him. It argues that the executive order, which allows Immigration and Customs Enforcement and other federal agencies to maintain office space at

the jail, violates the city's prohibition on public officials using their office for

personal benefit. In an emailed statement, mayoral spokesperson



The Rikers Island jail complex stands in New York with the Manhattan skyline in the background June 20, 2014.

Associated Press

Kayla Mamelak Altus said the city would review the council's lawsuit. She added that it "seems baseless and contrary to the public interest in protecting New Yorkers from violent criminals."

Adams has repeatedly denied making any deal with the Trump administration over the criminal case.

ICE agents previously had a presence on the Rikers Island facility, which is on a hard-to-reach island in the East River, but they were effectively banned from operating there in 2014 under New York City's sanctuary laws.

In December last year,

Adams told Fox News after a meeting with President Donald Trump's border czar Tom Homan that Homan would like access to Rikers, and his administration was looking into "exceptions" to the sanctuary law.

In February, following another meeting with Homan, Adams announced he would once again allow ICE agents in the jail complex to assist with gang and drug-related investigations. The meeting came days after the Justice Department had ordered federal prosecutors in Manhattan to dismiss Adams' charges. □

Arkansas and Indiana ask USDA to let them ban soda and candy from SNAP

By JONEL ALECCIA and
ANDREW DeMILLO

Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) —

Republican governors in Arkansas and Indiana moved Tuesday to ban soft drinks and candy from the program that helps low-income people pay for groceries, becoming the first states to ask the Trump administration to let them remove such items from the program long known as food stamps.

Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders said her state's request is aimed at improving the health of nearly 350,000 residents who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP. "Taxpayers are subsidizing poor health," Sanders said at a Little Rock news conference with U.S. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins.

"We're paying for it on the front end and the back end."

In Indianapolis, Gov. Mike Braun was joined by U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and Mehmet Oz, who leads the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, to announce sweeping changes to "put the focus back on nutrition not candy and soft drinks." The two states are among several taking steps to strip the purchase of certain foods that may contribute to poor health through the federal program that spent \$100 billion to serve nearly 42 million Americans in 2024. The restriction has been a key goal for Rollins and Kennedy and his "Make America Healthy Again" agenda.

"They changed our food system in this country so that it is poison to us," Kennedy said Tuesday. "We can't be a strong nation if we are not a strong people."

The Arkansas plan, which would take effect in July 2026, would exclude soda, including no- and low-calorie soda; fruit and vegetable drinks with less than 50% natural juice; "unhealthy



U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. speaks as Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz listens during a Make Indiana Healthy Again initiative event in Indianapolis, Tuesday, April 15, 2025.

Associated Press

drinks;" candy, including confections made with flour, like Kit Kat bars; and artificially sweetened candy. It also would allow participants to use benefits to buy hot rotisserie chicken, which is excluded from the program now. The Indiana change would exclude candy and soft drinks from the list of foods eligible to be paid for with SNAP benefits.

Braun also issued executive orders changing work requirements for SNAP participants; reinstating income and asset verification rules; and launching a review of "improper payments and other administrative errors" to ensure that SNAP meets federal goals.

Antihunger groups oppose SNAP food restrictions, saying that research shows that program participants are no more likely than other low-income Americans to buy sugary drinks or snack foods.

And they say that limiting food choices undermines the autonomy and dignity of people who receive a benefit of about \$187 per month or about \$6.20 per day.

"They just seem to be targeting a specific population without having data that says that they are the issue or that this is going to

improve," said Gina Platano, a deputy director at the Food Research and Action Center, a nonprofit advocacy group.

Trade groups representing beverage and candy makers criticized the effort, saying that they narrowly target SNAP participants.

Representatives for American Beverage accused state and federal officials of "choosing to be the food police rather than take truly meaningful steps to lift people off SNAP with good-paying jobs."

Chris Gindlesperger, a spokesman for the National Confectioners Association, called the approach "misguided." □

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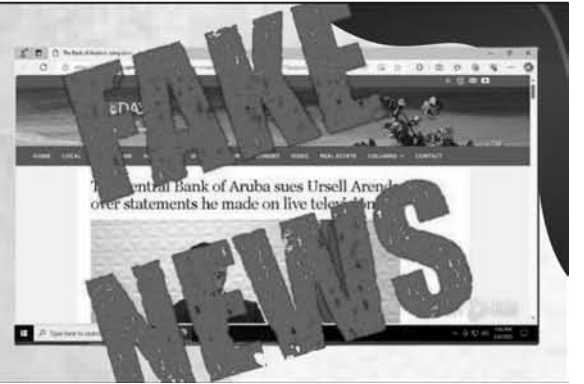
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California consumer group sues to block insurers from adding surcharge following L.A. fires

By **TRÂN NGUYEN**
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)

— A consumer advocacy group filed a lawsuit this week to block insurers from charging California customers for \$500 million in costs associated with the deadly Los Angeles fires. California's insurance commission in February ordered insurers doing business in California to provide \$1 billion to the FAIR Plan, the state's insurer of last resort, to help it pay out claims related to the LA wildfires. The order allows insurers to recoup half the cost from its policyholders in the form of a one-time fee. The commissioner must approve the costs.

The lawsuit, filed by Consumer Watchdog in Los Angeles, alleges Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara overstepped his authority and violated state laws for allowing for such cost shifting without going through the proper process. Such regulations have never



An aerial view shows the devastation from the Palisades Fire on beachfront homes, Jan. 15, 2025 in Malibu, Calif.

been authorized in California and should have been vetted and approved by the Legislature or other oversight agencies before enforcement, Consumer Watchdog argued. The suit is asking the court to block

Lara from approving the requests. There were at least three pending applications to implement a surcharge as of Tuesday, according to Consumer Watchdog. "We look forward to defending the rights and

pocketbooks of Californians and stopping this socialization of FAIR Plan losses at the public's expense, while the FAIR Plan's profits will wholly remain with the insurance companies," Consumer Watchdog staff

Associated Press

attorney Ryan Mellino said in a statement.

The Department of Insurance said the lawsuit could make California's insurance crisis worse.

"This hurts homeowners, small business and nonprofits who need access to insurance options, while doing nothing to address the insurance crisis," Gabriel Sanchez, a department spokesperson, said in a statement. "It also serves to undermine our efforts to restore competition to all areas of our state, so people can get off the FAIR Plan and back to the regular market."

The FAIR Plan is the state's last resort option for people who can't get private insurance because their properties are deemed too risky to insure. The plan, with high premiums and basic coverage, is designed as a temporary option until homeowners can find permanent coverage, but more Californians are relying on it than ever. □

Colorado judge puts temporary hold on deportations sought by Trump under Alien Enemies Act



A member of law enforcement stand near an entrance to an apartment complex during a raid by federal agents Feb. 5, 2025, in east Denver.

Associated Press

By **NICHOLAS RICCARDI**
Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — A federal judge has temporarily blocked deportations of immigrants in Colorado who face possible removal under President Donald Trump's invocation of an 18th century law known as the Alien Enemies Act.

District Court Judge Charlotte N. Sweeney issued the emergency order Monday night after the American Civil Liberties Union requested it on behalf of two Venezuelan men being held in Denver who feared they would be falsely accused of belonging to the gang Tren de Aragua. Trump has contended the gang is invading the United States, but his critics have said he's using the gang as the pretext for an overhyped anti-migrant narrative.

Sweeney's order temporarily bars removal of all noncitizens who are currently in custody in the District of Colorado and who may be subject to removal under the Alien Enemies Act, which Trump invoked last month. The act has been used only three other times in American history, most recently to intern Japanese-American citizens during World War II.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled last week that anyone being deported under the declaration deserved a hearing in federal court first.

That led federal judges in New York and Texas to place temporary holds on deportations in those areas until Trump's Republican administration presents a procedure for allowing such appeals. Sweeney's order follows in their footsteps. □

Four journalists who were accused of working for Kremlin foe Navalny are convicted of extremism

MOSCOW (AP) — A Russian court on Tuesday convicted four journalists of extremism for working for an anti-corruption group founded by the late opposition leader Alexei Navalny and sentenced them to 5 1/2 years in prison each.

Antonina Favorskaya, Konstantin Gabov, Sergey Karelin and Artyom Kriger were found guilty of involvement with a group that had been labeled as extremist. All four had maintained their innocence, arguing they were being prosecuted for doing their jobs as journalists.

The closed-door trial was part of an unrelenting crackdown on dissent that has reached an unprecedented scale after Moscow sent troops into Ukraine in February 2022.

The authorities have targeted opposition figures, independent journalists, rights activists and ordinary Russians critical of the Kremlin with prosecution, jailing hundreds and prompting thousands to flee the country.

Favorskaya and Kriger worked with SotaVision, an independent Russian news outlet that covers protests and political trials. Gabov is



Russian journalists, from left, Konstantin Gabov, Sergey Karelin, Artyom Kriger and Antonina Favorskaya, accused of working for a group founded by the late Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny, stand in a defendant's cage of the Nagatinsky District Court in Moscow, Russia, Tuesday, April 15, 2025.

a freelance producer who has worked for multiple organizations, including Reuters. Karelin, a freelance video journalist, has done work for Western media outlets, including The Associated Press.

The four journalists were accused of working with Navalny's Foundation for Fighting Corruption, which

was designated as extremist and outlawed in 2021 in a move widely seen as politically motivated.

Navalny was President Vladimir Putin's fiercest and most prominent foe and relentlessly campaigned against official corruption in Russia. Navalny died in February 2024 in an Arctic penal colony while serving

a 19-year sentence on a number of charges, including running an extremist group, which he had rejected as politically driven. Favorskaya said at an earlier court appearance open to the public that she was being prosecuted for a story she did on abuse Navalny faced behind bars. Speaking to reporters from

the defendants' cage before the verdict, she also said she was punished for helping organize Navalny's funeral.

Gabov, in a closing statement prepared for court that was published by the independent Novaya Gazeta newspaper, said the accusations against him were groundless and the prosecution failed to prove them.

"I understand perfectly well ... what kind of country I live in. Throughout history, Russia has never been different, there is nothing new in the current situation," Gabov said in the statement. "Independent journalism is equated to extremism."

In a statement Karelin prepared for his closing arguments that also was published by Novaya Gazeta, he said he had agreed to do street interviews for Popular Politics, a YouTube channel founded by Navalny's associates, while trying to provide for his wife and a young child. He stressed that the channel wasn't outlawed as extremist and had done nothing illegal.

"Remorse is considered to be a mitigating circumstance." □

Associated Press

Suspect linked to murder of Dutch journalist arrives in Netherlands after arrest on Caribbean island

By MIKE CORDER

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands

(AP) — A man arrested in Curacao on suspicion of involvement in a criminal gang linked to the murder of Dutch journalist Peter R. de Vries arrived in The Netherlands on Tuesday to face justice, prosecutors said.

The national prosecutor's office said in a statement that the man, whose identity was not released, played a "leading role" in a criminal gang that is thought to be behind the brazen shooting of De Vries on July 6, 2021, on a busy Amsterdam street. The popular pioneering

journalist died nine days later of his injuries, aged 64. The suspect, who has been incarcerated in Curacao, a former Dutch colony, since 2014, was arrested on Monday, prosecutors said in a statement. No detail was given why he was in a detention center on the Caribbean island.

He is scheduled to appear before a magistrate in Amsterdam, prosecution spokesperson Brechtje van de Moosdijk told The Associated Press.

The man is the latest suspect detained in the investigation into the killing of De Vries. An Amsterdam court convicted three men in June 2024 of murder for

their roles in the shooting that sent a shockwave through the country. Three others were convicted of complicity in the murder. While the motive for the killing remains unknown, there is speculation that it was linked to a string of gangland hits in and around the Dutch capital. Although gang leader Ridouan Taghi has been convicted of ordering some of them, he has not been charged in De Vries' killing. De Vries had been an adviser and confidant for a protected witness in the trial of the alleged leader and other members of a crime gang. The brother and lawyer of the witness

were both murdered. Taghi was convicted of his role in five gangland killings and sentenced to

life in prison in February. Judges called him the "undisputed leader" of a "murder organization." □



Dutch crime reporter Peter R. de Vries looks on prior to attending a live TV show in Amsterdam, Netherlands, on Jan. 31, 2008.

Associated Press

An international conference rallies aid for Sudan after 2 years of civil war, but peace is elusive

By JILL LAWLESS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain and the European Union pledged hundreds of millions of dollars Tuesday to ease suffering in Sudan, on the second anniversary of a civil war that has killed tens of thousands of people, displaced 14 million and pushed large parts of the country into famine.

The African Union, which co-hosted the daylong conference in London with Britain, France, Germany and the EU, called for an immediate cessation of hostilities. But U.K. Foreign Secretary David Lammy acknowledged that achieving peace would take time, renewed international effort and "patient diplomacy."

The main aim of the conference was not to negotiate peace, but to relieve what the United Nations calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The U.S. was expected to be represented at the conference, though the Trump administration has cut almost all overseas aid programs.

Lammy announced 120 million pounds (\$158 mil-



Bankole Adeoye, Political Affairs, Peace and Security Commissioner for the African Union, center, attends the London Sudan conference at Lancaster House in London, Tuesday, April 15, 2025.

Associated Press

lion) in U.K. funding for the coming year to deliver food for 650,000 people in Sudan. The EU and its member states pledged 522 million euros (\$590 million) in aid for 2025.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock told the conference that "no amount of humanitarian assistance will be sufficient if this war continues."

Attendees included offi-

cials from Western nations, international institutions and neighboring countries, but no one from Sudan. Neither the Sudanese military nor the rival paramilitary it is fighting was invited. Lammy told delegates that "many have given up on Sudan," concluding that continued conflict is inevitable. He said a lack of political will is the biggest obstacle to peace.

"We have got to persuade the warring parties to protect civilians, to let aid in and across the country and to put peace first," Lammy said.

Sudan plunged into war on April 15, 2023, after simmering tensions between the Sudanese military and a paramilitary organization known as the Rapid Support Forces. Fighting broke out in the capital, Khar-

toum, and spread across the country, killing at least 20,000 people, though the number is likely far higher.

Last month the Sudanese military regained control over Khartoum, a major symbolic victory in the war. But the RSF still controls most of the western region of Darfur and some other areas.

More than 300 civilians were killed in a burst of fighting in Darfur on Friday and Saturday, according to the U.N.

More than 3 million people have fled to neighboring countries including Chad and Egypt. Both sides in the war have been accused of committing war crimes.

The World Food Program says nearly 25 million people half of Sudan's population face extreme hunger. Aid agency Oxfam said the humanitarian catastrophe risks becoming a regional crisis, with fighting spilling into neighboring countries. It said that in South Sudan, itself wracked by recent war, the arrival of refugees has put more pressure on already scarce resources, "which is deepening local tensions and threatening the fragile peace." □

Ant smugglers arrested in Kenya as government warns of changing trafficking trends

By EVELYNE MUSAMBI

Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Two Belgian teenagers were charged Tuesday with wildlife piracy after they were found with thousands of ants packed in test tubes in what Kenyan authorities said was part of a trend in trafficking smaller and lesser known species.

Lornoy David and Seppe Lodewijckx, two 19-year-olds who were arrested on April 5 with 5,000 ants at a guest house, appeared distraught during their appearance before a magistrate in Nairobi and were comforted in the courtroom by relatives. They told the magistrate they were collecting the ants for fun

and did not know that it was illegal.

In a separate criminal case,

Kenyan Dennis Ng'ang'a and Vietnamese Duh Hung Nguyen also were charged



Belgian nationals Lornoy David, left, and Seppe Lodewijckx, right, who admitted to charges related to the illegal possession and trafficking of live queen ants to sell as exotic pets, appear at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport Law Courts in Nairobi, Kenya Tuesday, April 15, 2025.

Associated Press

with illegal trafficking in the same courtroom, following their arrest while in possession of 400 ants.

The Kenya Wildlife Service, or KWS, said in a statement that the four men were involved in trafficking the ants to markets in Europe and Asia, and that the species included messor cephalotes, a distinctive, large and red-colored harvester ant native to East Africa.

The illegal export of the ants "not only undermines Kenya's sovereign rights over its biodiversity but also deprives local communities and research institutions of potential ecological and economic benefits," KWS said.

Kenya has in the past

fought against the trafficking of body parts of larger species of wild animals such as elephants, rhinos and pangolins among others.

But the cases against the four men represent "a shift in trafficking trends from iconic large mammals to lesser-known yet ecologically critical species," KWS said.

The two Belgians were arrested in Kenya's Nakuru county, which is home to various national parks. The 5,000 ants were found in a guest house where they were staying, and were packed in 2,244 test tubes that had been filled with cotton wool to enable the ants to survive for months. □



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17 di April - Lucky Eggs Pop-up event:

With a total of \$2,500 in cash prizes. With every 50 points at slot machines/ \$25 Theoretical Win at table games, receive a raffle ticket. Drawings will be from 9:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. where a total of 5 lucky winners will be selected.

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Every Saturday in April starting at 9:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. there will be \$4,000 in cash prizes. With every 150 points at slot machines/ \$75 Theoretical Win at table games you receive a raffle ticket. Drawing will be from 9:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. where a total of 6 lucky winners will be selected.

Easter Bingos!

For all visitors who like to play Bingo, there will be the tremendous Easter Bingos on April 20th and April 21st starting at 1:00 p.m. Bingo cards are at \$20 each. Every day there will be \$5,575 in cash prizes, great door prizes and

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Easter Brunch at the Sunset Grille, a festive affair



(Palm Beach)—The newly renovated Sunset Grille celebrates Easter on April 20th from 11 am to 2 pm with a special event, serving unlimited à la carte brunch with endless Henriot Champagne flutes.

Easter Brunch at the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino is a beloved tradition that brings together friends and family members to celebrate togetherness, old and new connections, across all age groups young and old, sharing delicious food in an indoor setting that blends the restaurant's clas-

sic style with patrons' contemporary taste in a fresh perspective.

Among menu Highlights: Shakshuka, Lobster Benedict, Oyster & Caviar, Tuna Tartare, Smoked Duck, Scallops, Braised Short Ribs and more. For those who prefer their desserts liquid, the menu also features the Espresso Martini and White Chocolate Raspberry Martini, among other sweet sensations. Brunch, that perfect blend of breakfast and lunch is made even more special with Henriot Champagne, from the Reims re-



gion in Champagne, France. The prestigious House of Henriot was founded in 1808 and has been producing award-winning, luminous Champagne ever since.

For the full menu visit the website <https://sunsetgrillearuba.com/easter-brunch/>, book online through open table or call 526-6612. The Sunset Grille, Aruba's only alfresco steakhouse, offers prime cuts of meat, fresh



seafood, shareable plates and signature specialties crafted with timeless sophistication. The restaurant has been an island favorite for over two decades, blending its legendary brand of hospitality with culinary innovation. Open nightly for dinner at 5.30 pm or visit Sunset Bar for hand-crafted cocktails, before or after dinner, or anytime during the day for a small bite and a refreshing drink. □



Enjoy one of the best views on Aruba at the top of the Hooiberg Hill

(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the most popular climbing sites on the island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and

sometimes even the Santa Anna mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

located at the center district of the island, Santa Cruz, the Hooiberg Hill is the second highest point on

the island at 165 meters above sea level (or about 540 feet above sea level). The highest point is Jamoata Hill at 189 meters (620 feet), located in the Arikok National Park.

The staircase that run on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase consisted of 900 steps. Over time, as the steps faced erosion, the government decided to renovate these stairs in 1991. This new project delivered the newer staircase with only 587 steps. However, don't be fooled—it may still be a work out to get on top. In addition, there is now a gazebo placed halfway up the stair for a little rest. The view at this resting stop is also a sight to see.

The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day. □



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Visit the island's hidden natural pools



(Oranjestad)—Amongst the countless beaches surrounding the island that are well-known and frequently visited, there are an additional two “hidden” natural pools that are situated in the northern coast of the island, two ideal stops in your tour itinerary.

Conchi (Natural Pool)

For many years, Conchi was the only natural pool that we had on the island. Located in the Arikok National Park, near Boca Keto and the Daimari Ranch, Conchi—also known “Cura di Turtuga (Turtle's Cove) or just Natural Pool—is reachable with any 4x4 vehicle or by foot if you're up for a long hike.

However, since it is part of the National Park, you must first get permission from park management to enter. You would have to purchase a day pass, and receive a wristband as proof of payment. Once you've completed that, you are set!

If you decide to hike from the entrance of the Arikok National Park, this is also possible: do bring plenty of protective clothing and enough water and food—it could take you up to three hours to hike there!

However, when you eventually do get there, you will be greeted with crystal blue water surrounded by a natural rock formation that protects you from the wild waves on the other side. Though the pool is located on the northern side of the island (where the sea is largely rough and largely no suitable for swimming), the pool itself is very calm. It's also relatively deep, and you can climb up the rocks and jump in!



Cave Pool

This relatively new pool appeared just a few years ago, when a part of the dried up coral floor broke off and created a partition between the ocean and what is now the natural pool that is hidden there. Because it's still so new, there is no official name for it, but most people just call it the cave pool. Just like the Conchi, the new natural pool is situated on the northern coast of Aruba. However, this pool is much easier to reach with any type of vehicle, and there is no hiking needed. This spot has also become a regular stop for touring visitors.

When you get there, maybe you

won't be able to spot the pool immediately, because you will probably notice the moon-shaped lagoon where wild northern waves crash into each other. Sounds scary, but if you look down on your right, you'll see a calm, crystal blue little pool in the corner. To get there, you have to climb down some stairs. Be careful when climbing down and follow the instructions of your tour guide if you have one.

And just like Conchi, this pool also has a jumping spot, and a rope to climb back up the boulder. □

Picture of cave pool is credited to RockaBeach Tours

Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf



of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say “Masha Danki” to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three levels of honor are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Goodwill Ambassadors
Mr. Donald and Mrs. Sue Hemmerlein from Jasper, Indiana, USA.

Ms. Keyttin Silva, representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Divi Aruba Phoenix

Beach Resort bestowed the certificate upon the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked Mr. and Mrs. Hemmerlein for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the Mr. and Mrs. Hemmerlein were:

- Aruba's climate
- Aruba's friendly people and outstanding warm people
- Aruba's great facilities
- Aruba's turquoise ocean and white beaches
- It is easy to travel from the USA

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the “One Happy Island”. □



Article by Etnia Nativa

WhatsApp us 592 2702 and book your Aruban experience!

Etnia Nativa is close to high rise Hotels



Watertoren

Episode CCXCIX -299

Aruba has long thrived on balance—between cultures, nature, and a relaxed way of life. But growing threats like over-tourism, over-migration, and environmental strain are pushing our island to the edge. This platform is here to protect our heritage and re-connect with what it truly means to be Aruban.

In the previous episode, we explored the evolution of Aruba's drinking water system, highlighting the construction of two water towers in 1939—one in Oranjestad and the other in San Nicolas. These towers significantly increased the island's initial water storage capacity and helped maintain constant pressure in the distribution lines during peak hours.

Beyond simply reaching every household and regulating pressure, the towers played a vital role in improving hygiene and public health across Aruba.

Standing 40 meters tall and built 25 meters above sea level, each tower housed a reservoir with a capacity of 400 cubic meters. Designed by architect Pieter van Stuivenberg, they are notable for their distinctive and innovative Art Deco architecture.

During the severe drought of the 1970s, the San Nicolas Water Tower operated near full capacity. However, with the opening of the desalination plant in Balashi in 1979, the tower became obsolete. It was transferred to the Monument Foundation in 1996, restored, and finally reopened in 2016 as an industrial museum. The Oranjestad Water Tower was inaugurated three months later. Located on J.G. Eman Street, it housed the offices of the Administrative Jurisdiction Ordinance Appeals Committee (LAR), while the water service offices were located at its base. Its architectural design—an elegant blend of Nieuwe Bouwen (New Building) and American Art Deco—is especially evident in the tall, vertical columns that define its façade.

As Aruba's population grew, new housing developments created a demand for larger strategically placed water tanks. The Oranjestad tower was eventually decommissioned and dismantled in 1990. The construction of the original towers not only ensured a consistent water supply but also contributed significantly to public hygiene, safety, and essential services. Clean, pressurized water was critical for daily routines and vital facilities such as hospitals, schools, the abattoir, and other sanitation-dependent sites. Flush toilets and functioning sewage systems helped prevent disease by minimizing the infiltration of bacteria or contaminated groundwater through pipe leaks.

By storing water for peak demand—such as in the mornings or on hot days—the towers helped ease pressure on treatment plants and provided a crucial reserve for emergencies like fires, power outages, or



burst pipes. Because the stored water had already been disinfected at the treatment plant, the towers also played a key role in preserving water quality throughout the distribution system.

WEB Aruba N.V. has been supplying the island with drinking water since 1932 and began generating electricity in 1958. Today, it uses a combination of Multi-Stage Flash Distillation and Seawater Reverse Osmosis (SWRO) to desalinate seawater and deliver high-quality water to the community. The process begins with seawater collection and preliminary filtration, followed by desalination, where the true transformation occurs. In the SWRO stage, seawater is forced through specialized membranes, reducing its salt content from around 55,000 ppm to approximately 400 ppm. Since this is still too salty for consumption, the water passes through the membranes a second time, bringing salinity down to just 8–10 ppm.



In the final stage, the water is re-mineralized by adding specific phosphates approved by NSF International. This step ensures the water meets health and safety standards before it is distributed through the pipeline network.

Thanks to this advanced process, Aruba is recognized as a global leader in the production of safe, healthy, and high-quality drinking water. It's a continuous effort—maintaining, improving, and evolving, day by day. □

Curious about Aruba's true identity? Don't wait until the end of your trip—visit Etnia Nativa, the Caribbean's only living museum. Since 1994, we've been preserving culture, nature, and heritage. We're co-founders of Aruba's National Park and the Archaeological Museum Aruba, and active board members of several foundations. More than a museum, it's a gateway to Aruba's spiritual roots and authentic soul. WhatsApp+297 592 2702 etnianativa03@gmail.com

Aruba's underwater wonderland

ORANJESTAD - Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are many fascinating under water spots, where you can take your snorkeling gear and we selected the top spots for you.



Tres Trapi

Tres Trapi means tree steps in Papiamentu, Papiamentu is together with Dutch the official language spoken on Aruba. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by the tree steps carved into the rocks. Tres Trapi is a small rocky beach, located on the north-western side of the island, approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm Beach. From the unique steps you can easily walk over the beach into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While snorkeling you will encounter all kind of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of the Caribbean sea and if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles. Respect the animal, keep your distance and enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience.



Antilla shipwreck

Antilla is a 400-foot-long long ship, built in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany. Antilla came to Aruba, because it had to find a neutral port. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, the crew decided to let

their own ship sink, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Dutch Navy. Antilla lies on its portside in Malmok bay, and the sunken word war two ship is now one of Aruba's most popular snorkeling and dive spots. However, the ship wreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the ship wreck alone is already impressive enough.



Baby Beach

Baby beach; a white beach, with a crystal blue ocean. The beach is located on the southern part of the island. On the way to the famous beach, you will drive through the old capital of Aruba, San Nicolas. The old Aruban culture can be still felt and experienced here, so do not hesitate to get out of your car and walk around for a while. Baby beach is a child friendly beach, since it is shallow and the water has a pleasant temperature. The name therefore fits well with the beach. Baby beach is an excellent beach for snorkeling, especially if you want to go with small children, because the water remains shallow and there are still many underwater wonders to see. In the ocean there is an area marked until where it is recommended to snorkel and on the beach you will find different facilities. It is a perfect beach to spend your day snorkeling and relaxing.



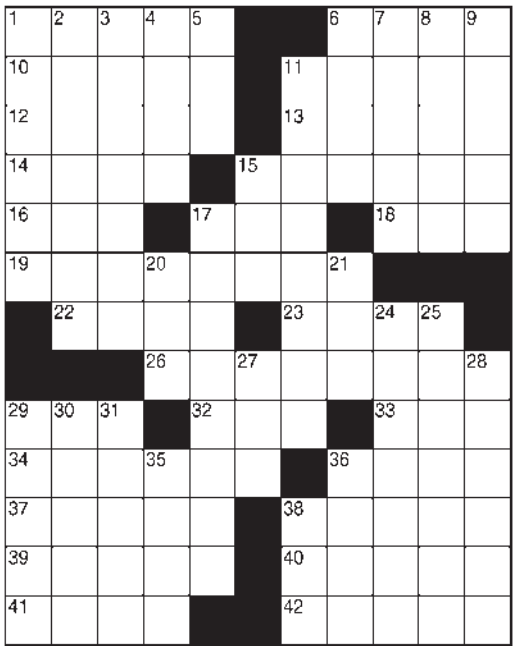
Mangel Halto

Mangel Halto beach is located in Savaneta, on the southern-west part of the island. The beach is different from the other beaches in Aruba; it is beach full of mangroves. You reach the beach by a bridge through the mangroves and then you will have several entrances to the sea. There are diverse spots where you can enjoy a perfect beach day, wooden stairs made to enter the water and a dock to sit on and enjoy the view. Mangel Halto is also worth a visit for the snorkeling experience. Inside the bay, the water is clear and you find many colorful fish. Outside the bay is a bit more challenging for beginners because of the wind and the waves, but the coral is alive and it is just like snorkel heaven. □

CROSSWORD
By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 41 Farm females
 - 1 Lowly workers
 - 6 Fortitude
 - 10 Dance parties
 - 11 Ecu
 - 12 Put up
 - 13 Trig topic
 - 14 Brown songbird
 - 15 Big snake
 - 16 Do something
 - 17 Treasury Dept. div.
 - 18 Gift from Santa
 - 19 Knick-knack shelves
 - 22 Way out
 - 23 Mystique
 - 26 Some online helpers
 - 29 Frilly wrap
 - 32 Ram's mate
 - 33 Porch sight
 - 34 Square
 - 36 Ring of light
 - 37 Clean with effort
 - 38 Talk at length
 - 39 Indian dish
 - 40 Get up
- DOWN**
- 1 Would-be lawyer's major
 - 2 Otologist's case
 - 3 Strain
 - 4 Bottle part
 - 5 Fast plane
 - 6 Polite fellow
 - 7 Proper
 - 8 Dome-shaped home
 - 9 Minute
 - 11 Massa-chusetts
 - 15 Old hand
 - 17 On paper
 - 20 Quirk
 - 21 Deli order
 - 24 Hungary neighbor
 - 25 Be-wildered
 - 27 Cobbling tool
 - 28 Go pieces
 - 29 Name on the Cardinals' stadium
 - 30 Promptly
 - 31 Squirrel's find
 - 35 For us
 - 36 Fling
 - 38 Scandal sheet

F A S T S C A R O L
A D H O C E L E N A
D E A T H V A L L E Y
E L M T I S A L E
D E S T I N E T A R
A C E R E N E
B R I N K M U S E D
L E N S W A D
O F T T I M E L A G
G E E I S M O R E
G R A N D C A N Y O N
E E R I E L E A S E
R E S T S S O L E S



AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-19 CRYPTOQUOTE

PQIJP KG PMTP TJ L LFCBQG
TNN NTA PB MGNH PMG JNTZG,
JB ALNN L LFCBQG LP TNN PB
HQBGRP TC GCJNTZGX ABKTC.

— JIJTC V. TCPMBCW

Cryptoquote: THERE ARE YEARS
THAT ASK QUESTIONS AND YEARS THAT
ANSWER. — ZORA NEALE HURSTON

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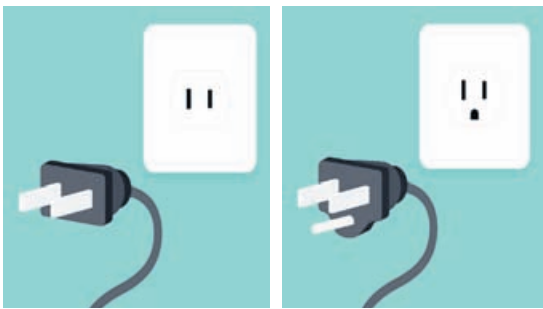
			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
TUE	15	CELEBRITY REFLECTION CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00 09.00	23.00 23.00	B C	1 1
WED	16	MARELLA DISCOVERY FREEWINDS	08.00 06.00	20.00 ****	C E	1 1
THU	17	NIEUW AMSTERDAM VILLA VIE ODYSSEY	07.00 08.00	17.00 ****	B C	1 1
FRI	18	VILLA VIE ODYSSEY - Dept.	****	22.00	C	-
SUN	20	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.



A strong solar storm heads to Earth. Here's what to know about northern lights

By ADITHI RAMAKRISHNAN
AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A strong solar storm headed to Earth could produce colorful aurora displays across more U.S. states than usual Tuesday night.

The sun earlier this week burped out huge bursts of energy called coronal mass ejections, leading space weather forecasters to issue a geomagnetic storm watch.

Northern lights were forecast in Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. □



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ARUBA TODAY NEWS



The Black Crowes and Jimmy Page revisit a unique 25-year-old live set

By MARK KENNEDY
AP Entertainment Writer
NEW YORK (AP) — One of the more puzzling live albums of all time came out in 2000. It featured songs from a two-night stand with The Black Crowes and Led Zeppelin icon Jimmy Page. But fans hoping to hear "Hard to Handle" or "She Talks to Angels" were out of luck. Bizarrely, not a



Chris Robinson, left, and Rich Robinson, center, of The Black Crowes, appear with Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin in London on April 2, 2025.

Associated Press

stored songs but also in some outtakes, including five songs at soundcheck and the never-before-released song Rich Robinson and Page wrote while jamming, called simply "Jams."

"I think the surprises are the things that really excite us as well," says Chris Robinson. "We didn't even know that we had this extra material or the other things that we hadn't really thought about until this project came around."

The concerts at The Greek capture a partnership that would endure. Page and the Crowes would go on a full-length American tour in the summer of 2000 and are friends today.

"We were all then joined in the hip when we were playing, and it was just such a joyful event to for me to be playing with these guys, and I guess them to be playing with me, too," says Page.

The album re-release comes as The Black Crowes are enjoying a creative patch, earning their second career Grammy nod last year for "Happiness Bastards," nominated for best rock album alongside the Rolling Stones.

Chris Robinson is philosophical about the timing of the anniversary release. Despite the songs sitting in a vault for a quarter of a century, he's just happy they can now be heard.

"I do have a firm belief that things happen when they're supposed to happen because they're supposed to happen," he says. "And if you play around with that too much, it might not have the same resonance, you know?"

single Black Crowes song was on it.

Twenty-five years later, that misstep has been fixed. The 36-track "Jimmy Page & The Black Crowes: Live at the Greek," restores 16 previously unreleased songs and offers a better window into a unique trans-Atlantic rock combination.

"The whole project was special, very electric for us, very something very alive," says singer-songwriter Chris Robinson. "I think we were all for lack of a better word just abuzz with what we were doing as a band, as an outfit together."

The live tracks were recorded at The Greek Theatre in Los Angeles over two nights in October 1999. It captured musicians who were cooking after previous stops at New York City's Roseland Ballroom; the Centrum in Worcester, Massachusetts; and The Palace of Auburn Hills in Michigan.

"I think we really felt like it wasn't the Black Crowes with Jimmy Page. It was one thing, it was one group," says Chris Robinson. "We really felt connected and tied. I just think we just had a really high

energy level, and we knew we were onto something that was powerful."

An album missing something

The album that came out had Zeppelin tunes like "Celebration Day," "In My Time of Dying" and "Whole Lotta Love," as well as old blues and R&B standards like "Woke Up This Morning," "Sloppy Drunk," "Mellow Down Easy" and "Shake Your Money Maker," plus the Yardbirds' "Shape of Things to Come" and Fleetwood Mac's "Oh Well."

But no Black Crowes songs were included due to contractual reasons: The band had just left their label and weren't allowed to use anything from their catalog.

"We were happy with what came out. We were bummed that we weren't able legally to put our songs on the record," says songwriter and guitarist Rich Robinson. Adds his brother Chris: "I wasn't surprised by how inept that decision was."

"I felt really bad about that because they extended this hand of friendship that I could come and join the

band," says Page. "I felt really sad because I knew the versions that we did were really good of their songs."

The anniversary edition of "Live at the Greek" includes the once-dropped Black Crowes' tunes "No Speak No Slave," "Hard to Handle," "Wiser Time," "Remedy" and a version of "She Talks to Angels," which Rich Robinson says Page took "to a totally different direction and a new level." Zeppelin tunes like "Misty Mountain Hop" and "Bring It on Home" are also included.

In addition to Page and the brothers, the band on stage included Sven Pipien on bass, Eddie Harsch on keyboards, Audley Freed on guitar and Steve Gorman on drums. Page says he felt loose and connected with the guys.

"In the past, whenever I knew it was going to be recorded, say in the Zeppelin days, I'd always get really nervous," he says. "But with this, I didn't have any of that anxiety or anything. We were on a wave."

Hits and some soundchecks

Fans will delight in the re-



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The NBA playoffs will, once again, be an international showcase of stars

By **TIM REYNOLDS**
AP Basketball Writer

They'll be watching in Canada, not just because of Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, though the NBA's scoring champion and MVP favorite who plays for Oklahoma City surely helps lure in fans who are north of the border.

They'll be watching from Serbia and Greece, the homelands of Denver star Nikola Jokic and Milwaukee star Giannis Antetokounmpo. Alperen Sengun will have them watching Houston games in the middle of the night in Turkey, too. Fans in Cameroon will be tuned in to see Pascal Siakam and the Indiana Pacers. Defending champion Boston features, among others, Kristaps Porzingis of Latvia and Al Horford of the Dominican Republic.

Once again, the NBA playoffs are setting up to be a showcase for international stars.

In a season where the five statistical champions were from five different countries, an NBA first Gilgeous-Alexander is Canadian, rebounding champion Domantas Sabonis of Sacramento is from Lithuania, blocked shots champion



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, right, shoots near Los Angeles Lakers forward Jarred Vanderbilt, left, during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, April 8, 2025, in Oklahoma City.

Associated Press

Victor Wembanyama of San Antonio is from France, steals champion Dyson Daniels of Atlanta is from Australia, and assists champion Trae Young of the Hawks is from the U.S. the postseason will have plenty of international feel as well. Gilgeous-Alexander is in, while Sabonis and Daniels (along with Young, obviously) could join him if

their teams get through the play-in tournament.

"We have a tremendous number of international players in this league," NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said earlier this season. "It's roughly 30% of our players representing, at least on opening day, 43 different countries, so there's much more of a global sense around our teams."

By the end of the season, it wound up being 44 different countries at least in terms of countries where players who scored in the NBA this season were born. For the first time in NBA history, players from one country other than the U.S. combined to score more than 15,000 points; Canadian players scored 15,588 this season, led by

Gilgeous-Alexander, the first scoring champion from that country.

Gilgeous-Alexander is favored to be MVP this season. It'll be either him or Jokic, which means it'll be a seventh consecutive year with an international MVP for the NBA. Antetokounmpo won twice, then Jokic won three of the next four, with Cameroon-born Joel Embiid of the Philadelphia 76ers winning two seasons ago.

"Shai is in the category of you do not stop him," Toronto coach Darko Rajakovic said after a game between the Raptors and Thunder this season.

In other words, he's like a lot of other international guys now. Nobody truly stops Jokic, Antetokounmpo, and Doncic either.

And this season brought another international first: Doncic finished atop the NBA's most popular jersey list, meaning NBAStore.com sold more of his jerseys than they did anyone else's. Sure, that was bolstered by Doncic changing jerseys midseason when he was traded by Dallas to the Los Angeles Lakers, but it still is significant. □

WNBA assembles task force to help combat online hate toward players and teams

By **DOUG FEINBERG**
AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert announced shortly before the draft Monday that the league has assembled a dedicated task force to help combat online hate and vitriol directed toward players and teams.

"We want to ensure that the WNBA remains a space where everyone -- players, fans and corporate partners -- feel safe, valued and empowered," she said.

Engelbert said that the task force will have a four-pronged approach,

including monitoring social media and other digital platforms by using advance technology to detect threats and comments. The league will also strengthen conduct standards across WNBA platforms. There will be added security measures at league and team levels, as well as dedicated mental health clinicians.

"There's no space for hate, and I think there is just continuing drain on all of us, on players, on staff, staff on our teams," Engelbert said. "After last year, I think we just really wanted to do something ... it was time to put this task force together

and really hit it head-on, so that's what we're going to do."

The commissioner said that the league has worked with team representatives as well as external groups to help the task force. Many WNBA players spoke out last season about the increased racial, homophobic and misogynistic comments on social media.

During last season's WNBA Finals, New York Liberty star Breanna Stewart said that she and her wife Marta Xargay received threatening homophobic anonymous emails after Game 1. "It feels good to going into

a league that's not only concerned about the level of play, but also how we're

functioning as humans," said Chicago draft pick Hailey Van Lith. □



TCU's Hailey Van Lith, right, poses for a photo with WNBA commissioner Cathy Engelbert after being selected 11th overall by the Chicago Sky during the first round of the WNBA basketball draft, Monday, April 14, 2025, in New York.

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GO-KART RENTALS



Rory McIlroy has the Masters and a Grand Slam. That gives him freedom to chase more

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP Golf Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — The Mount Rushmore of golf now has six faces carved into granite, and for that Rory McIlroy should feel as though he achieved the highest pinnacle in golf.

But there is so much more ahead for McIlroy.

He turns 36 next month and believes he is a better player than he was 10 years ago. There is little evidence to suggest otherwise.

In his 18 years on tour half his life as a professional golfer McIlroy has never won three times before the calendar turned to May. He has never felt so much freedom. He is playing with house money, and that has nothing to do with the \$13.2 million he already has won this year in his six starts on the PGA Tour alone.

He is the Masters champion.

He now has a locker upstairs in the Augusta National clubhouse where he will find a size 38 green jacket waiting for him the rest of his life, a seat at the table Tuesday night at the Masters Club dinner. This was 11 years in the making. What a feeling.

The chest heaving as McIlroy dropped his head on the 18th green after winning was sheer relief. "The joy came pretty soon after that," he said, and that much was evident by the look on his face when Scottie Scheffler helped him slip those arms into a green jacket.

"What are we all going to talk about next year?" McIlroy said, first in Butler Cabin and later to start his news conference. That's the freedom he feels.

How about next month?



Scottie Scheffler puts the green Jacket on winner, Rory McIlroy, of Northern Ireland, at the Masters golf tournament, Sunday, April 13, 2025, in Augusta, Ga.

Associated Press

The career Grand Slam is in the books. It's not too soon to consider a calendar version of the Grand Slam. The rest of the majors this year certainly line up in his favor. The PGA Championship is next month at Quail Hollow, where McIlroy is a four-time winner.

He was among the players who went along with a fantasy question last summer. If the leading player in the FedEx Cup could choose where to hold the Tour Championship, where would it go? McIlroy picked Quail Hollow without hesitation.

The U.S. Open is at Oakmont, a big course for big hitters.

That would suit him as well as anyone, though his last time there he shot 77 in an opening round held over two days because of rain and was gone by the weekend.

The British Open returns to

Royal Portrush on his home soil of Northern Ireland, where McIlroy has a score to settle. The last time at Portrush, his own hopes and expectations were so high he hit his opening tee shot out-of-bounds, made an 8 and wound up missing the cut.

He returns with more freedom than pressure.

All that is a long way off, but it's an example how the conversation about McIlroy has turned. It's no longer what he was lacking but what else he can gain. Scheffler, who was with him in Butler Cabin and during the trophy presentation, offered this observation Tuesday: "I don't have the understanding of what it's like to be asked about the career Grand Slam, but I have a small understanding of what it's like to be asked, 'Hey, you accomplished this, but you haven't accomplished that.' It can

be very taxing on people sometimes."

Brad Faxon, a close friend who works with McIlroy on his putting, said there was nothing stopping McIlroy now and that he could double his number of majors. "He can go on to win 10," Faxon said.

Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus once said a young Tiger Woods had the fundamentals to win 10 green jackets, as many as both of them combined. Woods got halfway there.

McIlroy was still 18 holes away from winning his first major in the 2011 U.S. Open at Congressional when Padraig Harrington declared, "If you're going to talk about someone challenging Jack's record, there's your man."

Nicklaus has the gold standard in golf with 18 majors. McIlroy now has five, the same as Brooks Koepka, 10 fewer than Woods.

It's easy to get caught up in the excitement. This Masters ranks among some of the great moments at Augusta National Woods in 2019, 2001 and 1997, Nicklaus in 1986 and 1975, Arnold Palmer in 1960.

But this wasn't easy for McIlroy, not on Sunday, not the previous 16 years. It had been 11 years since he won any major, and while winning the Masters was his dream, only twice in 16 previous tries did McIlroy go to the back nine with a serious chance of winning.

Far more haunted were players like Greg Norman and Tom Weiskopf, David Duval and Ken Venturi. That all had more scar tissue.

McIlroy said two years ago after his close call at the U.S. Open that he would go through "100 Sundays like this" to get another major. He would have gone through 1,000 Sundays to get a green jacket, especially considering all that was at stake.

McIlroy now is the sixth player with the career Grand Slam, joining Woods, Nicklaus, Gary Player, Ben Hogan and Gene Sarazen. Only four of them actually "won" the career slam because the modern version of it wasn't even a thing until Arnold Palmer declared it one in 1960.

The only other player to complete the slam at the Masters was Sarazen in 1935 when it was held for the second time and wasn't even called the Masters. He officially won the Augusta National Invitation Tournament.

Green jackets weren't awarded until 1949. The Masters Club dinner on Tuesday night didn't start until 1952. □